

THE CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An audio player assembly comprising:
 - (a) an MP3 player; and
 - (b) an audio player unit comprising at least one speaker, an FM receiver operatively coupleable with the speaker, and a modular docking unit having a main body portion with a docking cavity therein for docking said MP3 player, wherein said audio player unit is operatively connected with the MP3 player for receiving an audio signal produced by the MP3 player and for outputting a corresponding audible signal through the at least one speaker, wherein the modular docking unit further comprises any of a frequency indicator on the main body portion and a frequency tuning control on the main body portion.
2. (Cancelled)
3. The audio player assembly of claim 1, wherein said modular docking unit further comprises a retention element adapted to retain the MP3 player in position in the docking cavity.
4. The audio player assembly of claim 1, wherein the modular docking unit comprises at least one indicator element indicative of the operational state of the unit.
5. The audio player assembly of claim 4, wherein the indicator element comprises a light indicating an "ON" or "OFF" state of the unit.
6. The audio player assembly of claim 4, wherein the indicator element indicates the charging status of a battery in the MP3 player when the MP3 player is docked in the docking cavity of the modular docking unit.
7. (Cancelled)
8. The audio player assembly of claim 1, wherein the audio player unit further comprises an FM transmitter for transmitting the audio signal produced by the MP3 player to the FM receiver, which in turn communicates said audio signal to the at least one speaker for outputting the audible signal.

9. The audio player assembly of claim 1, wherein said modular docking unit further comprises power/charging circuitry and an electrical coupling element in the docking cavity for connecting the MP3 player with the power/charging circuitry.
10. The audio player assembly of claim 9, wherein the coupling element in the docking cavity comprises any of a FireWire™ and an IEEE 1394-compliant coupling.
11. The audio player assembly of claim 1, wherein said modular docking unit comprises a coupling element that connects with an audio output port of the MP3 player for receiving the audio signal produced thereby and transmitting the received audio signal to an amplifier in the audio player unit, wherein said amplifier is coupled with the at least one speaker for outputting the amplified audio signal through said at least one speaker as the audible signal.
12. (Cancelled)
13. (Cancelled)
14. The audio player assembly of claim 1, wherein the main body portion of the modular docking unit has a generally rectangular shape.
15. The audio player assembly of claim 1, wherein said MP3 player comprises an iPod™ MP3 player.
16. The audio player assembly of claim 1, wherein said audio player unit comprises a boom box unit.
17. An audio player adapted for use with an MP3 player, the audio player comprising:
 - (a) a modular docking unit having a main body portion with a docking cavity therein for docking the MP3 player, and having an associated FM receiver with any of a frequency indicator on the main body portion and a frequency tuning control on the main body portion;
 - (b) a communicating element associated with the main body portion and adapted to communicate audio signals produced by said MP3 player to the audio player;

(c) at least one speaker for outputting audible signals corresponding to audio signals received from any of the FM receiver and the MP3 player.

18. The audio player of claim 17, wherein said modular docking unit further comprises a retention element adapted to retain the MP3 player in position in the docking cavity.

19. The audio player of claim 17, wherein the modular docking unit comprises at least one indicator element indicative of the operational state of the unit.

20. The audio player of claim 19, wherein the indicator element comprises a light indicating an "ON" or "OFF" state of the unit.

21. The audio player of claim 19, wherein the indicator element indicates the charging status of a battery in the MP3 player when the MP3 player is docked in the docking cavity of the modular docking unit.

22. The audio player of claim 17, wherein said modular docking unit further comprises power/charging circuitry and a coupling element in the docking cavity for connecting the MP3 player with the power/charging circuitry.

23. The audio player of claim 22, wherein the coupling element in the docking cavity comprises any of a FireWire™ and an IEEE 1394-compliant coupling.

24. The audio player of claim 17, wherein the communicating element comprises a coupling element adapted to connect with an audio output port of the MP3 player, for communicating audio signals from the MP3 player to an amplifier associated with the audio player, wherein the amplifier is operatively coupled with the at least one speaker.

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Cancelled)

27. The audio player of claim 17, wherein the main body portion of the modular docking unit has a generally rectangular shape.

28. (Cancelled)
29. The audio player of claim 17, wherein the communicating element comprises an FM transmitter for transmitting audio signals produced by the MP3 player to the FM receiver.
30. The audio player of claim 17, adapted for use with an iPOD™ MP3 player.
31. The audio player of claim 17, embodied in a boom box unit.
32. The audio player assembly of claim 1, wherein the modular docking unit comprises a frequency indicator on the main body portion.
33. The audio player assembly of claim 1, wherein the modular docking unit comprises a frequency tuning control on the main body portion.
34. The audio player assembly of claim 32, wherein the frequency indicator comprises a digital frequency display.
35. The audio player assembly of claim 1, wherein the at least one speaker comprises a plurality of speakers.
36. The audio player assembly of claim 1, further comprising a battery disposed within the main body portion and adapted to supply electrical power to the audio player.
37. The audio player assembly of claim 1, further comprising an AC interface element adapted to supply electrical power to the audio player.
38. The audio player assembly of claim 1, further comprising an amplifier adapted to amplify an audio signal and drive the at least one speaker.
39. The audio player assembly of claim 1, wherein the MP3 player comprises a storage medium adapted to receive and store digital media files.

40. The audio player assembly of claim 9, wherein the coupling element in the docking cavity comprises a USB coupling.
41. The audio player assembly of claim 9, wherein the power/charging circuitry comprises at least one conductive electrical circuit element.
42. The audio player of claim 17, wherein the modular docking unit comprises a frequency indicator on the main body portion.
43. The audio player of claim 17, wherein the modular docking unit comprises a frequency tuning control on the main body portion.
44. The audio player of claim 42, wherein the frequency indicator comprises a digital frequency display.
45. The audio player of claim 17, wherein the at least one speaker comprises a plurality of speakers.
46. The audio player of claim 17, further comprising a battery disposed within the main body portion and adapted to supply electrical power to the audio player.
47. The audio player of claim 17, further comprising an AC interface element adapted to supply electrical power to the audio player.
48. The audio player of claim 22, wherein the power/charging circuitry comprises at least one conductive electrical circuit element.
49. The audio player of claim 17, further comprising an amplifier adapted to amplify an audio signal and drive the at least one speaker.
50. The audio player of claim 17, wherein the MP3 player comprises a storage medium adapted to receive and store digital media files.

51. The audio player of claim 22, wherein the coupling element in the docking cavity comprises a USB coupling.
52. An audio player adapted for use with a portable digital media player having a storage medium adapted to receive and store digital media files, the audio player comprising:
- a main body portion having a docking cavity adapted to receive said portable digital media player, wherein the docking cavity includes therein an electrical coupling element adapted to engage the portable digital media player when the portable digital media player is received by the docking cavity;
 - an FM receiver having an associated frequency indicator disposed on the main body portion and a frequency tuning control disposed on the main body portion; and
 - at least one speaker associated with the main body portion and selectively operable with (1) the FM receiver, and (2) the portable digital media player when received by the docking cavity, to output audible signals.
53. The audio player of claim 52, wherein the portable digital media player comprises an MP3 player.
54. The audio player of claim 52, wherein the electrical coupling element is adapted to communicate audio signals between the audio player and the portable digital media player when the portable digital media player is received by the docking cavity.
55. The audio player of claim 52, wherein the electrical coupling element is adapted to conduct electrical power from the audio player to the portable digital media player.
56. The audio player of claim 52, wherein the electrical coupling element comprises any of a FireWire™ and an IEEE 1394-compliant coupling.
57. The audio player of claim 52, wherein the electrical coupling element comprises a USB coupling.
58. The audio player of claim 52, wherein the frequency indicator comprises a digital frequency display.

59. The audio player of claim 52, further comprising at least one indicator element adapted to provide visual indication of the operational state of the audio player.

60. The audio player of claim 52, further comprising at least one electrical circuit element adapted to perform at least one of charging and powering the portable digital media player through the electrical coupling element when the portable digital media player is received by the docking cavity.

61. The audio player of claim 55, further comprising at least one indicator element adapted to provide visual indication of the charging status of a battery associated with the portable digital media player when the portable digital media player is received by the docking cavity.

62. The audio player of claim 52, further comprising an FM transmitter adapted to transmit an audio signal produced by the portable digital media player when the portable digital media player is received by the docking cavity.

63. The audio player of claim 52, further comprising an amplifier adapted to amplify a signal supplied to the at least one speaker.

64. The audio player of claim 52, further comprising a battery adapted to supply electrical power to the audio player.

65. The audio player of claim 52, further comprising an AC interface element adapted to supply electrical power to the audio player.

66. The audio player of claim 52, wherein the at least one speaker comprises a plurality of speakers.

67. The audio player of claim 52, embodied in a boom box.

68. An assembly comprising the audio player of claim 52 and a portable digital media player docked within the docking cavity.